

Greenways
Knockholt
near Sevenoaks
Kent

7-053 966
Press Communiqué re
Camp Teignane

October 27th., 1966

Dear Vanko !

I received your Press communiqué and have sent a letter of protest to the Mayor of Montreuil, a copy of which I enclose.

The communiqué is not "hot" enough for the national Press in Britain, but it is going to be used as the bases for an article on the international Gypsy movement in the Oxford student paper "Isis" and for news stories in "Peace News" "Direct Action", "Socialist Leader," "Tribune" etc. I will send you cuttings in a week or two.

We're very much hoping to hear that you will be able to take over the direction of the proposed meeting in London on December 10th., under the auspices of the International Gypsy Committee. The Gypsy Liaison Committee is meeting here on November 6th. to discuss plans.

Ronald Lee has written to say there is a possibility that he will be in Britain during December, and so able to attend the foundation meeting. He has also got a duplicating machine and can produce "O Glaso Romano" soon. For a start, we are going to distribute 200 copies in Britain and have collected 120 addressees of Gypsies and travellers for this purpose.

This week, I met a pastor, C.J. Lywood, of the Free Evangelical Church. He has carried out 300 conversions among Gypsy people in the last two years and has established two churches with Gypsy congregations in Kent. I told him about the evangelical movement in France and have written to Clement Le Cossec about him. I hope that Lywood will co-operate with us by distributing "O Glaso Romano" at his churches.

I wrote to Mehmet Sakirovic at the camp in Montreuil in Srpsko-Hrvatski and I hope we will receive more information from him about what is happening.

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October 23rd., 1966

CAMP TZIGANE DE LA BOISSIERE

While in Paris recently for a meeting of the Comité International Tzigane, I visited friends at the camp at Boissiere, Montreuil. On arriving I was shocked and appalled to see that a number of the huts were on fire. Women and children were in great distress and their fear and anxiety was increased by the presence of armed police and bulldozers, which were being used to destroy other homes.

For sometime, leaders at the camp, members of the Romany Evangelical Church and members of the International Committee questioned the police officer in charge (M. Paon, Prefet de Police, I believe it was). He could give us no assurance that more homes would not be destroyed and on the contrary indicated that the authorities intended to evict all the families from the camp.

Our association in Britain and Ireland strongly protests at this inhuman treatment of our fellow Gypsies, who are refugees in this Paris suburb. They came to France to work at the invitation of the Government, who issued them with work permits. Now you are refusing to provide them with decent alternative accommodation.

We ask you, at this late hour, to reconsider the situation and to provide an alternative camp, with living accommodation, water and sanitation.

If, instead of accommodating the families whose homes are being destroyed you abandon them without shelter in winter weather, we intend to make a protest at the French Embassy in London on HUMAN RIGHTS DAY, December 10th., when a large number of our people will be attending our National Convention.

Please understand our feelings in this matter. Homes are being destroyed; a child has been injured. We want reconciliation with all people of goodwill. But we cannot, and will not, tolerate brutal injustice.

Yours sincerely,

Crattan Puxon
General secretary

Communité des Voyageurs

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near Sevenoaks
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October 26 1966

DRAGI MEHMET SAKIROVIC !

Nadam se da ti jos stanujes kod kampa u Boissieru.

Vanko pise da ste bili kod 'les Mairies de Montreuil et Roany-sous-Bois.' Isto, on pise da je jedan rakli bolesna.

Mi smo pisali PROTEST Fransuski Ambasador u Londonu. Kazemo da treba dati vama (sve familije) druga, nova kampa ili kuce.

Ako ne da, mi cemo ici u Konsulatoj u "Human Rights Day" December 10 - drugi protest.

Pisi sto je bilo !

Imate mnogo brati i prijatelji ovdje u Engleskoy.

Puno pozdrava,

Grattan Puxon